



Ward and Smith, P.A.'s Dealer/Distributor and Franchising Practice Group offers specialized services to dealers and distributors, manufacturers, marketing and sales representatives, licensors and licensees, and franchisors and franchisees. Our attorneys assist clients with a number of issues from contracts and dispute resolution, to managing dealers and franchisees, and complying with state, federal, and international laws. The group serves clients in the United States and throughout the world.

The Dealer/Distributor and Franchising Practice Group provides services such as drafting agreements for dealers, distributors, and marketing and sales representatives, including form and specialized agreements for dealers and distributors in the following industries, among others: marine, electronics, waste management technology, financial products, pharmaceutical equipment, farm equipment, and cleaning products manufacturing. We also work with franchisors and franchisees to review and draft franchise and development agreements and franchise disclosure documents, counsel on compliance issues, resolve disputes, and handle franchise sales and transfers. Additional services include handling antitrust concerns, in conjunction with the Business and Litigation Practice Groups, and representing our clients before the agencies responsible for consumer protection.

Our attorneys work with clients to get to know them and the businesses they operate. Building relationships allows our attorneys to resolve concerns and disputes and to customize our services to meet clients' needs. Our attorneys have extensive resources at their fingertips: within the Firm are attorneys licensed in 11 other states who can provide counsel and contacts concerning laws in those states. Our attorneys also draw on the skills of attorneys in other groups of the Firm, including Business, Intellectual Property, International, Litigation, and Tax.

Attorneys in the Dealer/Distributor and Franchising Practice Group bring to their work a range of complementary experiences including the following: legal advisor to a number of major companies in North Carolina; law school instructor; member of commissions and boards of the state government, the UNC System, and private business and nonprofit enterprises; and board member of economic and university committees and officer of a private foundation. This broad and unique scope of combined experience assists us in better understanding various kinds of client needs.

Our attorneys are members of various organizations from which they gain resources for their work, including the American Intellectual Property Law Association and the North Carolina Advocates for Justice.